LXVI. *The Caſe of the Operation of the* Empyema, *ſucceſsfully performed by Mr.* Joſeph Warner, *F. R. S. and Surgeon to* Guy's Hoſpital.

Read March 19, 1752.

THE ſymptoms of an empyema, or of a collection of matter depoſited in the cavity of the *thorax*, are ſufficiently known to every one of experience in phyſick and ſurgery. But the great uncertainty of ſucceſs attending the evacuation of this matter by operation, has occaſion'd ſurgeons of the greateſt eminence to differ about the propriety of the performance of it.

However, as it is notorious, that upon any quantity of extravaſated fluid being confined to the *thorax*, the patient not only labours under the moſt uneaſy ſenſations, but is in very great danger from the injury and oppreſſion, to which the lungs are expoſed, in conſequence of the diſeaſe; and that the ſucceſs of the operation greatly depends upon the degree of injury communicated to the lungs. and the reſt of the contents of the *thorax*; I am inclined to think, for theſe reaſons, as well as from the little danger there is in the performance of the operation, that it is always to be recommended upon the appearance of ſuch ſymptoms, as indicate ſuch a collection of matter: and whether the following caſe may be ſome proof of its propriety under certain circumſtances, I beg leave to ſubmit to your conſideration.

Thomas

Thomas Hines, aged 27, was admitted into the hoſpital on the 19 of December laſt, on account of a pain in his right ſide, and cough; which he had laboured under for three weeks. He was immediately put under the phyſicians care; but notwithſtanding all proper methods uſed for his relief, his diſorder increaſed till the 13 of January following, when I was conſulted.

Upon inquiry, I found him afflicted with the following ſymptoms, a quick low pulſe, frequent cough, and difficulty of breathing; which laſt ſymptom was greatly increaſed upon lying on his left ſide, or upon ſitting upright. He appeared greatly emaciated, his countenance very pallid, or ſallow. Upon farther inquiry, I found the right ſide of the *thorax* ſomewhat enlarged; the integuments were viſibly thickened, but without the leaſt diſcoloration, or perceivable fluctuation. However, being perſuaded from the foregoing ſymptoms, that there probably was an extravaſated fluid underneath, I adviſed the operation, which was accordingly done upon the ſpot, in the following manner:

The patient being conveniently ſeated, I made an inciſion of about three inches long, with a knife, betwixt the tenth, and eleventh rib, counting from above; and at about four inches diſtance from the *vertebræ*. The direction of the inciſion was agreeable to the courſe of the ribs; and upon being made nearer to the ſuperior edge of the eleventh rib, than to the inferior edge of the tenth rib, the intercoſtal artery by that means eſcaped being wounded. Upon dividing the intercoſtal muſcles, very near twenty ounces of matter were diſcharged, after which I introduced

introduced my finger thro' the wound into the cavity of the *thorax*, but found no adheſion of the lungs. From whence I am inclined to conjecture, that this abſceſs was originally formed in the cellular membrane of the *pleura*, which had at length made its way into the cavity.

What ſeems to corroborate this conjecture, is, that the violent ſymptoms, which happen'd upon lying on the ſound ſide, or upon ſitting upright, did not occur till within a week before his application to me.

From the moment the matter was diſcharged, he found immediate eaſe, his reſpiration became quiet; his fever and cough gradually abated, till in about ſix weeks he became perfectly well in all reſpects, and was accordingly diſmiſs'd the hoſpital.

The diſcharge from the wound continued in conſiderable quantities for the firſt fortnight; during which time the wound was kept properly open with tents: but when the diſcharge was no more than what might be expected from any ſuperficial wound of the ſame ſize, all tents were diſuſed, and ſuperficial applications only made uſe of.

LXVII. *An Account of the Eruption of Mount* Veſuvius *in* Oct. 1751, *in a Letter to Sir* Matthew Fetherſton-Haugh, *Bart. F.R.S. written at* Naples Jan. 15, 1752, *N. S.*

Read Mar. 19, 1752.

THAT, which has taken up our attention, and aſtoniſh'd us moſt, is the eruption of Mount Veſuvius. As it was a ſurpriſing prodigy of nature, I ſhall, for your amuſement,

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